



Safeguarding Children and Young Adults Policy and Procedures

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1. Commitment to safeguarding

At **Phoenix Dance Academy** we are committed to safeguarding all children under the age of eighteen and young people and we expect everyone who works in our organisation to share this commitment. Adults in **Phoenix Dance Academy** take all welfare and safeguarding concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interest of the child or young person to protect them from abuse and neglect

2. Principles

Phoenix Dance Academy acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young adults and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and complies with best practice requirements.

The Policy recognises that protecting the physical welfare and mental well-being and interests of children and young adults are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children and young adults:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe and child centred environment.
- are protected from physical and mental abuse whilst participating in activities organised within **Phoenix Dance Academy** premises or outside the Academy premises.

Phoenix Dance Academy acknowledges that some children and young adults, including disabled children, very young children, or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. As part of our Safeguarding Policy **Phoenix Dance Academy** will

- Promote and prioritise the safety and well-being of children and young people;
- Make every effort to ensure that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people;
- Make every effort to ensure that appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support is provided to the individual/s who raise or discloses the concern, if appropriate
- Make every effort to ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- Make every effort to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals and
- Make every effort to ensure that robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The Policy and Procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in **Phoenix Dance Academy**. Failure to comply with the Policy and Procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

3. Legislation & statutory guidance

The following Acts and Guidance provide basis for this Safeguarding Policy, they can be referred to when requiring more information on safeguarding children:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Data Protection Act 2018 (including the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR))
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010

4. Definitions

In England, Northern Ireland and Wales a child is someone under the age of 18, whether living with their families, in state care, or living independently (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

This generally applies in Scotland but in some cases, for example for parts of the Scottish Child Protection Process it will be 16.

5. Types of abuse and neglect (according to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022)

All school/club paid and unpaid staff and volunteers should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse:

A form of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children or young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional/community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. The child or young person may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child/children. Child abuse is a criminal offence.

Physical abuse:

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or young person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or young person. The physical abuse of a child or young person is a criminal offence.

Emotional abuse:

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child or young person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child or young person opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or young people. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection, limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child or young person from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children or young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or young people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child or young person, although it may occur alone. The emotional abuse of a child could be deemed a criminal offence.

Sexual abuse:

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child or young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching inside or outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children or young people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children or young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child or young person in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue. Sexual abuse of anyone is a criminal offence.

Be aware that it is illegal to engage in sexual relationships or activity with 16- or 17-year-olds when you are in a position of trust. A is considered in a position of trust in relation to B if A coaches, teaches, trains, supervises or instructs B on a regular basis in a sport and A knows this.

Related issues

In addition to the above categories, there are other forms of harm or abuse that should involve the police and other organisations working together to protect children and young people. These include:

- Bullying (including cyber bullying)
- Harassment
- Neglect
- Psychological abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Hate crimes
- Abuse in domestic settings
- Honour based violence
- Forced marriage
- Human trafficking
- Modern slavery
- Exploitation by radicalisers who promote violence

- Control and coercion.
- Membership of gangs inclined to use violence.

Many of these areas are addressed in local multi-agency child or vulnerable adult safeguarding procedures. You may feel that these situations are so unlikely to arise that you would never be required to respond. However, it is as well to be aware of these other related areas just in case your suspicions are raised.

Poor practice

Sometimes, your concerns may relate to poor practice, where an adult or another young person's behaviour is inappropriate and may be causing distress to a child or young person. In the application of this Policy, poor practice includes any behaviour which contravenes the principles of this document or the relevant Code of Conduct or brings Martial Arts into disrepute, or which infringes an individual's rights. Where poor practice is serious or repeated, this could also constitute abuse and should be reported immediately. Examples of poor practice towards students, which should never be sanctioned include:

- use of humiliating punishments;
- failure to act when you witness possible abuse or bullying;
- being unaware of, or breaching, any relevant policy such as the Code of Ethics and Conduct;
- spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others;
- inviting or allowing young people into your home or vehicle where they will be alone with you, unless parental/guardian consent has been obtained;
- allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- reducing a person to tears;
- allowing allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- doing things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves; sharing a bedroom with a young person you are not related to, even with parental permission;
- Inappropriately embarrassing a child or young person in front of others;
- Engaging in unnecessary physical contact;
- Sharing of email addresses, phone numbers, texting, social media sites etc.;
- Persistent criticism of children or young people;
- Placing unrealistic expectations or excessive pressure on children or young people;
- Persistently acting in a hostile or intimidating way.

The above list is not exhaustive.

If, during your care, you accidentally injure a children or young person, they seem distressed in any manner, or misinterpret something you have said or done, report these incidents as soon as possible to the designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer and keep a written note of it.

Some participants may require assistance with personal care due to being very young or disabled. If a child or young person needs this level of support it should be made clear to their parent/s or guardians that this can only be carried out by a designated carer and not by the instructor. Even if the instructor is trained in carrying out personal care tasks, this compromises their role as trainer and places them and the child or young person in a vulnerable position. These support arrangements should clearly be in place and agreed to by all parties prior to the activities commencing.

6. Signs and Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

Indicators that a child or young person may be being abused may include the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries;
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent;
- the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her;
- someone else (a young person or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another;
- unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper);
- inappropriate sexual awareness;
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age;
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour;
- sudden or unusual distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any;
- having difficulty in making friends;
- being prevented from socialising with other young people;
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite;
- or a sudden weight change;
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt;
- Seeming anxious, clingy or depressed;
- Running away or going missing;
- Person has belongings or money going missing;
- Different adults collecting and dropping off, without prior notice;
- Person is not attending or no longer enjoying their sessions;
- Self-harm;
- Fear of a particular group or individual;
- They tell you or another person that they are being abused.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place; there may well be reasons for a change in behaviour. A good working relationship with parent/guardians or carers will help to identify any other concerns that a child or young person may be experiencing. For example, a family bereavement which could cause some of the changes listed above.

It is not the responsibility of Phoenix Dance Academy to decide if child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them. See sections 9 and 10 for more information.

7. What to do if you have a concern or someone raises concerns with you

Phoenix Dance Academy recognises 'everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action' (page 11 para 16 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

Whilst accepting this duty, it is recognised **Phoenix Dance Academy** is not responsible for deciding if abuse has occurred. It does however have a duty to respond and report concerns.

All safeguarding concerns and poor practice occurrences, except if the issue concerns those individuals, **must** be reported to the designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer]. This includes issues raised concerning the activities of instructors or volunteers or, where there are concerns outside of **Phoenix Dance Academy** (for example at home, school or in the wider community). Where there is an allegation against an instructor or volunteer who works with children or young people at **Phoenix Dance Academy** the designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer] must report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer. See section 9 for more information.

Instructors and volunteers must also report the following to the designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer] and make a written record of what they have done, seen, or heard:

- They have accidentally hurt a child or young person;
- A child or young person seems distressed in any manner;
- a child or young person appears to be sexually aroused by their actions;
- a child or young person misunderstands or misinterprets something they have said or done.

If you think a child is in immediate danger or requires medical attention, you should call the emergency services on 999. You can also ring the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 to report immediate risks. This is an immediate responsibility and will take priority over informing the Designated Safeguard Lead or Deputy.

8. How to respond to a concern

It is always difficult to hear about or witness harm or abuse experienced by a child or young person. The following points will be helpful for both you and the child or young person should they choose to disclose abuse to you:

- **Stay calm.**
- **Listen carefully** to what is said and try not to interrupt.
- Find an appropriate point early on to explain that it is likely that the **information will need to be shared** with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow them to continue at their **own pace**.
- **Ask questions for clarification only** and avoid asking questions that suggest an answer (leading questions).
- **Reassure** them that they are not to blame and have done the right thing in telling you. If the concern is serious explain that you will need to get support from other trained people to help keep the child safe..
- **Tell them what you will do next** and with whom the information will be shared. If they are adamant that they do not wish the information to be shared, explain that you will have to tell your Designated Safeguarding Lead and that it will be discussed further with them.
- **Record in writing what was said** using the child or young person's own words as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given. Ensure the record is signed and dated.
- Be aware of the possibility of **forensic evidence** if the disclosure relates to a recent incident of physical harm or injury and try to protect any supporting materials e.g. bedding or clothing.
- **Contact your** designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer].
- Where you are unable to contact your designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer], advice can be sought from statutory agencies or the NSPCC Helpline.
- All serious concerns must be referred to statutory agencies.

- Where the concern or allegation is about a member of staff or a volunteer, this must like all other concerns be reported to the designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer]. If they consider the concern to be serious, for example potential child abuse or a crime, they must report the incident to the Local Authority Designated Officer or the Police.

Information Sharing

Remember that the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing; they provide a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately.

Keep information as confidential as possible, only sharing information where necessary. The information disclosed to you must only be shared with the designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer] and external agencies if required. A record should be kept of what has been shared, with whom and for what purpose for all personal data.

You must have a lawful basis under to Article 6 to process personal data, and if it is special category data, you must be able to satisfy an Article 9 condition. Article 9 contains 10 conditions, and these include explicit consent and also 'substantial public interest'. Schedule 1, Part 2 of the Data Protection Act 2018 details what would be covered by the substantial public interest condition, and this includes the safeguarding of children and individuals at risk (18(1)).

Be open with the individual from the outset and seek their agreement to share the information. Unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so, inform them why, how and with whom their information could be shared with and why it is necessary to share it.

Do however be aware that consent is not required if the child is at risk and you need to share the information to protect or keep the child or young person safe.

Before informing the parents/guardians/carers of the child or young person, consider whether:

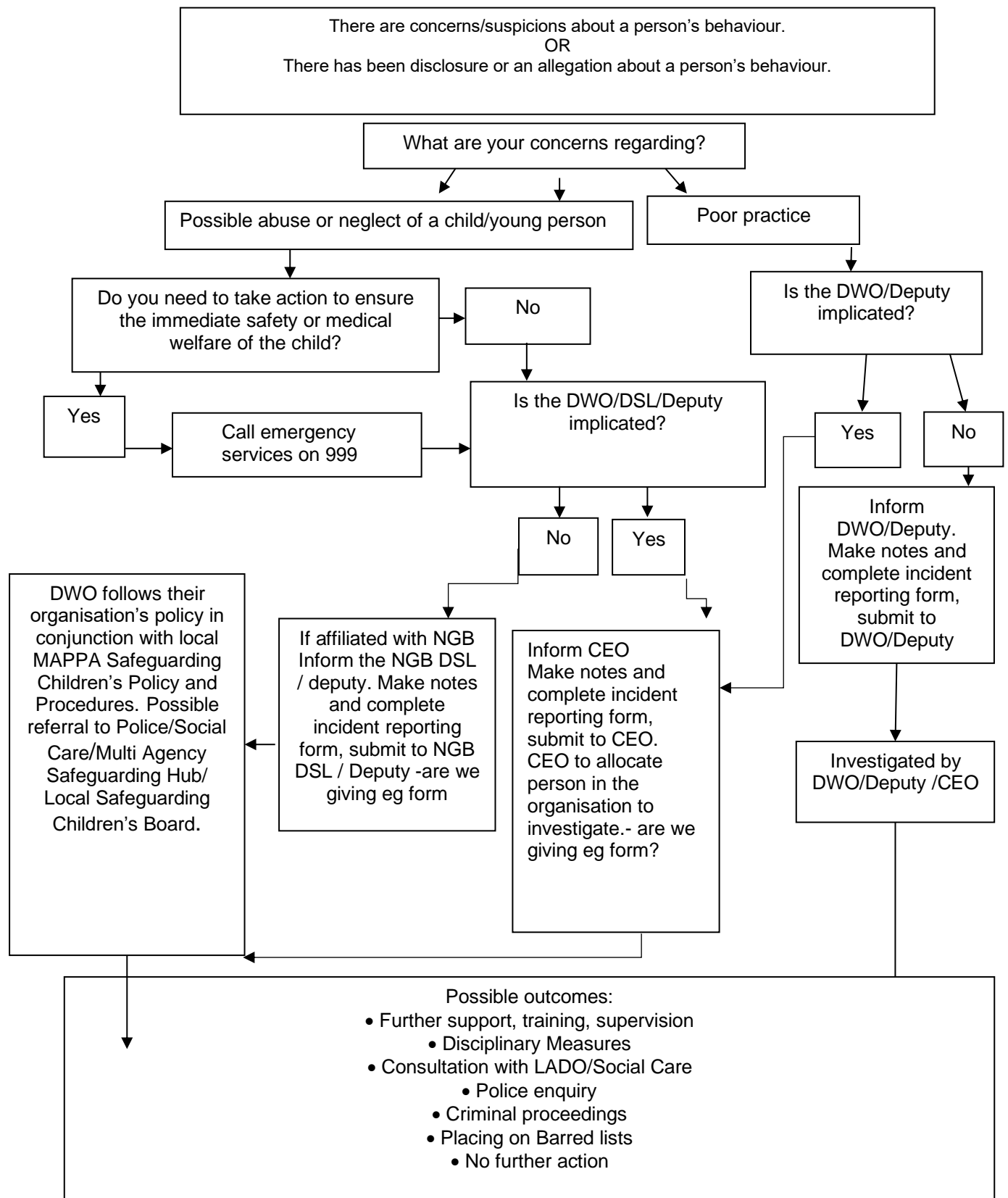
- Doing so would put the child or young person at greater risk; or
- The parents/guardians/carers are in any way implicated in the concern.

When a safeguarding concern or poor practice has been identified concerning a specific child or young person; the parents/guardians/carers of that child should be notified as soon as possible, and where possible within 48 hours, but only if doing so does not put the child or young person at significant risk and/or the family are not implicated. If in doubt, seek advice from your designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer.

Where the designated safeguarding lead/designated welfare officer] has reported the incident to the Statutory Authorities, advice should be sought from them regarding this duty before notifying the parents/guardians/carers.

PDA must be aware of the legislation surrounding the appropriate use of data. More information on how data should be retained, stored and destroyed in relation to child welfare concerns or concerns about possible risk posed by employees can be found on the CPSU [website](#) and on the Information Commissioner's Office [website](#).

9. Safeguarding Children Flowchart



10. Recording

Should a child or young person make a disclosure a record in writing must be made as soon as possible, and where possible within 48 hours, using their words as closely as possible and where relevant, using the school/club report form. Note the date, time, any names mentioned, names and addresses to whom the information was given and who else is aware of the allegation. Note or describe clearly any visible injury.

Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information you have is accurate.

Recording of any incident, including possible abuse or poor practice incidents, should also follow this procedure. In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises either from a disclosure of abuse or from suspicion of abuse, it is vitally important to record the details, regardless of whether they are shared with a statutory agency, as soon as possible using the incident reporting form for children and young people.

The record should be clear and factual as it may be needed by child protection agencies and may, in the future, be used as evidence in court. Records should be kept securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident. See the **Information Sharing** section above for further information.

Throughout the process of any safeguarding cases, accurate records should be made and maintained, please remember to date, time and sign all documents.

11. Codes of Conduct and Ethics

The codes of conduct and ethics for all those involved at Phoenix Dance Academy can be found as a separate guidance sheet. It is essential these are followed in so the highest possible standards of behaviour and conduct in Martial Arts activities are maintained. The principles must be adhered to at all times so that Martial Arts can be enjoyed by all. All those involved at **Phoenix Dance Academy** will show their understanding and commitment to the codes of conduct and ethics by signing a copy of the relevant guidance sheet.

12. Safer Recruiting

At **Phoenix Dance Academy** we take all reasonable steps to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Whilst there may be some reservations that volunteers could be put off by having to go through a recruitment process, it is important to ensure reasonable steps have been taken to identify unsuitable individuals. A guidance sheet can be found which outlines safer recruiting in further detail.

13. Supervision, support and training

Once recruited, all staff and volunteers at **Phoenix Dance Academy** will be well informed, trained, supervised, and supported to ensure that they effectively safeguard children and know how to respond to any concerns.

Phoenix Dance Academy will ensure that training and resources are available to encourage the development of staff and volunteers. This will include:

- an induction to the work and the school/club
- a trial period in which to develop skills whilst supervised
- ongoing support and monitoring

There are currently no formal qualifications specifically for safeguarding and protecting children in sport. However, training developed by sports and other organisations is available to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the sporting children's workforce to safeguard children and young people. Training plays an important role in equipping staff and volunteers to do their job safely and effectively. Different safeguarding training is available depending on the person's role.

It is important that training is refreshed and kept up to date within your club/organisation.

14. Whistleblowing

It's important that people within **Phoenix Dance Academy** have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they have concerns.

Whistleblowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrongdoing within their sports organisation. The NSPCC has a whistleblowing advice line to support professionals who have concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation.

More detail can be found on the Whistleblowing Policy.

15. Complaints

In order to ensure we develop an open culture where children and staff feel able to express any concerns, we have a procedure for dealing with complaints from a child, worker, volunteer, parent, guardian or carer.

This should be linked to the organisation's complaints procedures, ensuring the provision of support and advocacy for the people involved.

16. Links to other organisational procedures

It's useful to cross-reference other relevant organisational policies, including your:

- Adults Safeguarding Policy

- Health and Safety Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Disclosure and Barring Guidance
- Role of Designated Welfare Officer
- Codes of Conduct for Parents and Carers, Staff and Volunteers and Children and Young People
- Instructor Coaching Ratios

17. Useful contacts

Designated Welfare Officer (DWO)

- Name: Emma Schofield
- Telephone: 07990655715

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- Email: lado.referrals@wakefield.gov.uk.
- Telephone: 01924 727032

Police contact

- Name: Andrew Morrell
- Email: cmaauk@hotmail.com
- Telephone: 07909 673894

NSPCC

- Telephone: 0808 800 5000
- Email: help@nspcc.org.uk